

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
HA-05 ACDA-12 MCT-02 SY-05 OPR-02 A-01 /093 W
-----060807 171912Z /50

R 171845Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5384
INFO AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 01 OF 02 MADRID 08147

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: N.A.

TAGS: PINS, PINT, SP

SUBJECT: THE BASQUE SITUATION: NORMALITY RETURNS; THE
GOVT ACTS; NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE

REF: 1. MADRID 8085, 2. MADRID 8017

1. SUMMARY: NORMALITY RETURNED TO THE BASQUE REGION
OVER THE WEEKEND, AS THE GOVT ANNOUNCED THE REPLACEMENT
OF THE CIVIL GOVERNOR OF NAVARRE AND THE FIRST TRANS-
FERENCES OF AUTHORITY TO THE BASQUE GENERAL COUNCIL.
"MODERATE OPTIMISM" WAS THE MOOD ATTENDING FURTHER
GOVT/UCD-PSOE-PNV NEGOTIATIONS ON THE CONSTITUTION'S
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AUTONOMY PROVISIONS, BUT THE OUTCOME REMAINS UNCERTAIN.
END SUMMARY.

2. NORMALITY RESTORED. NORMALCY RETURNED TO THE
BASQUE COUNTRY OVER THE WEEKEND, WITH ONLY ONE
DEMONSTRATION -- A PEACEFUL JULY 16 MARCH BY SOME
13,000 IN SAN SEBASTIAN -- REPORTED IN THE REGION.

AMCONSUL BILBAO POINTS OUT THAT THIS IS A RELATIVELY SMALL TURNOUT FOR SUCH A BROADLY SPONSORED MANIFESTATION, AND HE ASSUMES THAT THE PNV AND PSOE, THOUGH SIGNERS OF THE CONVOCATION COMMUNIQUE, WERE NOT PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN TURNING THEIR PEOPLE OUT. IN FACT, ACTION ON THE BASQUE FRONT SHIFTED LARGELY TO MADRID OVER THE WEEKEND, BOTH IN THE FORM OF ANNOUNCED GOVERNMENTAL DECISIONS AFFECTING THE REGION AND OF CONTINUING NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVING THE GOVT/UCD, THE PSOE, AND THE PNV CONCERNING THE AUTONOMY PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION.

3. GOVT ACTS. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ANNOUNCED AFTER ITS JULY 15 MEETING THTT IT HAD HEARD INTERIOR MINISTER MARTIN VILLA'S REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY AND HAD TAKEN THE FOLLOWING DECISIONS IN THAT REGARD:

-- CIVIL GOVERNOR OF NAVARRE IGNACIO LLANO WAS REPLACED BY EDUARDO EMEIJIDE (A POLITICAL COLLABORATOR OF PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ) WHO, UNTIL HIS APPOINTMENT TO THE NAVARRESE POST, HAD BEEN CIVIL GOVERNOR OF THE PROVINCE OF CIUDAD REAL.

-- A DECREE-LAW WAS APPROVED PROVIDING FOR THE FIRST TRANSFERENCES OF AUTHORITY TO THE BASQUE GENERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COUNCIL. THESE TRANSFERENCES, ESSENTIALLY TECHNICAL IN NATURE, WERE IN THE AREAS OF AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND URBANISM. THEY DID NOT TOUCH ON THE COMPLEX AND SENSITIVE QUESTIONS OF THE TRANSFER OF PUBLIC ORDER POWERS OR THE CREATION OF AN ETHNIC BASQUE POLICE FORCE.

4. NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE. MEANWHILE, THREE-SIDED GOVT/UCD-PSOE-PNV TALKS ON THE AUTONOMY SECTION OF THE CONSTITUTION CONTINUED (REFTEL). PNV SOURCES REPORTEDLY STATED JULY 15 THAT EARLIER "TENSIONS" HAD BEEN OVERCOME, AND THE GENERAL MOOD WAS DESCRIBED AS "MODERATELY OPTIMISTIC." PSOE LEADER ALFONSO GUERRA, WHO HAS PARTICIPATED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, TOLD THE PRESS IN BARCELONA JULY 16 THAT HE WAS "IN A POSITION TO ANNOUNCE THAT THE PNV WILL ACCEPT THE CONSTITUTION AND WILL CAMPAIGN IN SUPPORT OF IT IN THE REFERENDUM." BUT THE OUTCOME OF THE TALKS, WHICH CENTER ON THE ADDITIONAL CONSTITUTIONAL DISPOSITION CONCERNING HISTORIC FORAL RIGHTS AND ARTICLE 143 ON POWERS RESERVED TO THE CENTRAL GOVT, IS FAR FROM CLEAR. PNV SENATOR MIGUEL UNZUETA TOLD EMBOFF THAT

THE NEGOTIATIONS WOULD PICK UP AGAIN THIS AFTERNOON
(JULY 17) IN MADRID.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE ANNOUNC-
ING THE GOVT'S DECISIONS STRESSED THAT THESE FIRST
TRANSFERENCES HAD "NOTHING TO DO WITH RECENT EVENTS
IN THE BASQUE COUNTRY," THEY AND THE SACKING OF THE
NAVARRESE CIVIL GOVERNOR OBVIOUSLY WERE IN RESPONSE
TO THE RECENT VIOLENCE AND THE POLITICAL DEMANDS IT
HAD ENGENDERED, AND ARE INTENDED AS AN EARNEST OF THE
GOVT'S GOOD INTENTIONS TOWARD THE BASQUES. ALTHOUGH

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THEY DO NOT SATISFY ALL OF THE POST-VIOLENCE DEMANDS
(WHICH INCLUDED TRANSFER OF PUBLIC ORDER POWERS TO
THE BASQUE GENERAL COUNCIL, THE SACKING OF THE CIVIL
GOVERNOR OF GUIPUZCOA, AND THE FIRING OF INTERIOR
MINISTER MARTIN VILLA), THE GOVT COULD NOT REASONABLY
HAVE BEEN EXPECTED TO DO MUCH MORE AT THIS JUNCTURE
WITHOUT EXPOSING ITSELF TO CHARGES THAT IT HAD ABDICATED
ITS AUTHORITY. THE REAL TEST WILL NOW BE THE OUTCOME

OF THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE CONSTITUTION'S AUTONOMY
PROVISIONS, AND IT IS THERE THAT LOCAL ATTENTION HAS
NOW TURNED. TODMAN

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